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DCI/IC-78-0038
10 July 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

FROM:

Deputy to the DCI for Resource Management

SUBJECT: PRC(I) Meeting of 20 July 1978

1. Dr. Brzezinski has recommended, apparently at the urging of Bob Rosenberg and Sam Hoskinson, that the following item be added to the PRC(I) agenda immediately after endorsement of the "A" and "B" lists and before the discussion of priorities from the users' perspective that we proposed:

"Review relationship between National Intelligence Topics, their relative priorities and proposed program and budget options: formulate a process for the PRC to refine its conclusions regarding this relationship prior to final budget submission."

2. Rosie told me late Thursday evening, 6 July, that he was thinking along this line. He and Sam have been groping for some time for a way to involve the PRC(I) more deeply in the budget process.

3. I had hoped we could engage the PRC(I) in a discussion limited to priorities from the users' perspectives, eliciting advice that would be useful to you and discharging your responsibility to consult with the PRC(I) without having to seek their endorsement of specific programmatic decisions. But the timing of the meeting is likely to make it very awkward to keep the discussion away from specific issues. By 20 July at least partial, and perhaps full sets of issue papers--minus our staff recommendations--will be available to each member through the NFIP agencies within his department. The members will know some of the alternatives you are considering and any effort to limit the discussion

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to generalities will be difficult. At least in one respect the timing is advantageous, however. By 20 July you will not have made any final program decisions. Therefore, you will only have to defend considering certain options rather than any actual decisions.

4. I recommend that you split their proposal into two items. At this stage, I think a discussion of the first item, linkage between questions and budget options, would lead nowhere. I am becoming convinced that we will in the future be able to relate missions to options satisfactorily, but I'm more skeptical that it will be useful to try to link questions, like those in the NITs, to resources. If we had to, however, I think we could put together something that addressed that issue in time for the meeting. The draft paper I sent you last week might suffice for that discussion, as well.

5. The second item in Dr. Brzezinski's proposal, the call for a "process" is, I think, another attempt to arrange staff support for PRC(I) deliberation on budget matters. It will be hard to refuse to address this issue without seeming unreasonable. A "process" need not be very complex, and I think that we could probably devise one that would have relatively low probability of getting out of control. You and Secretary Brown worked well together through the OMB-Presidential Spring Review, and I would like to figure out a way to take advantage of that natural alliance. I think the PRC can be more than a rubber stamp, and if we design the system carefully, it can be useful support when you present the NFIP budget to OMB and the President. Should we work on sketching such a process?

6. If you accept Dr. Brzezinski's suggested topic, it would fit more logically as number three than number two.

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